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## CRITICAL NOTES.

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### THE STRUCTURE OF THE SONG OF DEBORAH.

THE Song of Deborah occupies an especially prominent place in old Hebrew literature. The most radical criticism does not venture to doubt the genuineness of the song, and regards it in general as a contemporary poem, which describes the events and delineates the conditions as seen by an eyewitness. The song, which arose about the twelfth century B. C., is also remarkable from the fact that the canon has transmitted to us the old and original division into linear arrangement. In spite of these favorable conditions, I have hitherto been unable, after repeated attempts, to discover the strophical structure of the song. Very recently, however, I believe that I have found the key to the strophical construction, which is indeed very complex. It would, perhaps, not be uninteresting to state the method by which I acquired the knowledge of its structure.

Starting with the assumption that rigid thought-divisions must be the mark of a strophical paragraph, and that either parallelism or antithesis must bind together two successive strophes, I recognized in vss. 24-27 and in 28-30 two such paragraphs. Of these, the first delineates the tragical overthrow of Sisera in the tent of Jael, where he sought hospitality and found death; the second describes the anxious waiting of the mother of Sisera, who is solicitous for the long delay of her son, and as well as she can seeks to console herself. Two situations more different in fact and in thought, yet intimately connected, can scarcely be the product of poetical phantasy. A glance at the text convinced me that, as it is presented to us, it is in full harmony with the rhythm; that it numbers in the two paragraphs *twelve* and *eleven* lines respectively, in which I believe that I have recognized the trace of the strophical construction. Aside from the parallelism in thought of the two strophes, their last three lines exhibit, by the repetition of the same thought in similar words, a certain symmetry in construction.

After a further examination of the song I was convinced that vss. 12-15<sup>abc</sup> and 15<sup>de</sup>-18 form a similar pair of strophes. In the

one, the willingness to fight, and the self-sacrifice of the tribes who took part in the battle, are praised ; in the other, the preference of private interests to the common good is held up to contempt and censure. Both strophes again exhibit 12+11 lines and several traces of parallelism in word and subject-matter, and are thereby shown to be a counterpart to the pair of strophes at the end of the song.

Between the two pairs of strophes stand vss. 19-23, which picture the overthrow, and delineate, in an exceedingly concise and vivid way, the *battle*, the *victory* (or *defeat*), and the *flight*. This middle section, a kind of *entre-filet* between the two pairs of strophes, exhibits a peculiar structure. It falls according to thought and subject into three parts of 4+7+4 lines. The *first* short strophe gives a picture of the charge of the allied kings, who fought, not with the cowardice of mercenary troops, but with desperate courage, yet to no purpose, because (as stated in the *second* strophe) the forces of nature had combined against them, the stars of heaven and the brook Kishon had fought against them. That this unified strophe, which delineates the battle, was consciously constructed by the poet in two paragraphs (the charge and the resistance) is shown in the double parallelism in the first two lines of each strophe (נלחמו). The two paragraphs together number eleven lines, but since these are divided into two subparagraphs of four and seven lines respectively, symmetry requires another four-line paragraph, which is furnished in vs. 23. In this verse the inhabitants of the adjacent territory are censured because they had taken no part in the battle, nor in the pursuit of the fleeing enemy. The additional short strophe is again, by a double antithetic parallelism (אורר), in the first two lines of each united with the following strophe (תברך). Consequently, the result is a complete, symmetrical structure:

$$(12+11)+(4+7+4)+(12+11).$$

It remains to consider the prologue of the song, which is given in vss. 2-11. This falls, according to its content, into three paragraphs:

The *first* (vss. 2-5) contains the address, the praise of Jahweh, and the remembrance of his powerful and mighty appearance in *former times*.

The *second* paragraph (vss. 6-8) brings to mind the wretched conditions in the *immediate past*, before the uprising under Deborah, when the tribes, rent asunder by diversities of worship, were not able to withstand any enemy.

The *third* paragraph (vss. 9-11), whose first two lines correspond

to the first paragraph, delineates the self-sacrificing uprising under Deborah which terminates in victory. Metrically, the introduction forms a descending strophical formation (11+10+9), in which 11 again appears as a metrical unit.

The entire song concludes with two lines which gather up the moral of the narrative. This has been added, perhaps, by the poet himself; perhaps by a later writer.

I exhibit below the strophical structure of the song according to my conception of it, retaining the traditional division into lines :

JUDGES, CHAP. 5.	TRANSLATION.
1 ותשר דבורה וברק בן אבינעם ביום ההוא לאמר	Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam thus :
2 בפרע פרעות בישראל בהתנדב עם ברכו יהוה	When a leader arose in <i>Israel</i> , <i>The people offered themselves willingly—</i> <i>praise Jahweh!</i>
3 שמעו מלכים האזינו רזנים אנכי ליהוה אנכי אשירה אזמר ליהוה אלהי ישראל	Hear, ye kings, give ear, ye rulers ! I, to Jahweh I will sing, I will play to Jahweh, Israel's God :
4 יהוה בצאתך משעיר בצעדך משדי אדום	Jahweh, when thou wentest forth from Seir, When thou marchedst from the fields of Edom,
ארץ רעשה גם שמים נטפו גם עבים נטפו מים	The earth quaked, even the heavens dropped down, Yea, the clouds dropped water.
5 הרים נזלו מפני יהוה זה סיני מפני יהוה אלהי ישראל	Mountains dissolved (quaked violently) before Jahweh, This Sinai before Jahweh, Israel's God.
6 בימי שמגר בן ענת בימי יעל חדלו ארחות	In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath. In the days of Jael, the highways were a waste
7 והלכי נתיבות ילכו ארחות עקלקלות חדלו פרזון בישראל חדלו	And travelers sought out byways. There was no leadership in Israel, there was none,
עד שקמתי דבורה שקמתי אם בישראל	Until thou, O Deborah, didst arise, Didst arise as a mother in Israel.
8 מגן אם יראה ורמח בארבעים אלה בישראל יבחר אלהים חדשים אז לחם שערים <sup>1</sup>	Neither shield was seen nor spear, Among forty thousand in Israel; They (the people) chose new gods, Then <i>war was at their gates</i> .
9 לבי לחקקי ישראל	My heart (belongs) to the leaders in Israel

<sup>1</sup> Vs. 8 has been transposed; 8 a + b after 8 c + d.

המתנדבים בעם ברכו יהוה	<i>Who offered themselves willingly with the people — praise Jahweh!</i>	
רכבי אתנות צהרות	They who ride on reddish white she-asses,	10
ישבי על מדין	They who recline on [choice] coverings,	
והלכי על דרך שיחו	They who travel on the highway—proclaim it!	
מקול מתצצים בין משאבים	Louder than the voices [of those that tread the gravel-walk <sup>2</sup> ] between the water drawing,	11
שם יתנו צדקות יהוה	They praise there the victories of Jahweh	
צדקות פרוזנו בישראל	The victories of his leadership in Israel	
אז ירדו לשערים עם יהוה	Since he came down to the <i>gates</i> of Jahweh's people.	
<hr/>		
עורי עורי דבורה	Rouse thee, rouse thee, O Deborah!	12
עורי עורי דברי שיר	Rouse thee, rouse thee, strike up the song.	
קום ברק ושבה שבך בן אבינום	Up, Barak, and bring in thy booty, son of Abinoam!	
אז ירד שריד לאדירים עם	Then came down the little band of heroes,	13
יהוה ירד לי בגבורים	Jahweh's people came down with the heroes.	
מני אפרים שרשם בעמלק	Out of Ephraim (they come), whose root is (mount) Amalek.	
אחריד <sup>3</sup> בנימין בעממיד	After him thou followest, O Benjamin, with thy tribes.	14
מני מכיר ירדו מחקקים	From <i>Machir</i> (Manasseh) the leaders are coming down	
ומזבולן משכים בשבט ספר	And from Zebulon those who wave the commander's staff.	
ושרי ביששכר עם דבורה	And the princes of Issachar with Deborah	15
ונפתליו <sup>4</sup> כן ברק	And [ <i>Naphtali</i> ] as Barak's	
בעמק שלח ברגליו	Into the <i>plain</i> on foot they rushed headlong.	
בפלגות ראובן	In the valleys of Reuben—	
גדלים חקקי לב	Were there great heart-decisions.	
למה ישבת בין המשפטים	Why did you remain among the flocks	16
לשמע שריקות עדרים	To listen to the pipings of the herds (-men)?	
לפלגות ראובן גדלים חקרי לב	In the valleys of Reuben were there great heart-decisions.	
גלעד בעבר הירדן שכן	<i>Gilead</i> (Manasseh) abides beyond the Jordan	17
דן למה יגור אניות	And Dan—why does he tarry in the ships?	
אשר ישב לחוה ימים	Asher sits by the seashore	18
יעל מפרציו ושכן	And remains quiet by its bays.	

<sup>2</sup> *I. e.*, those that walk on the gravel-walk to draw water.<sup>3</sup> Read אחריו.<sup>4</sup> TM. ויששכר.

זבלון עם חרה נפשו למות  
ונפתלי על מרומי שדה

Zebulon (on the other hand) is a tribe  
that exposed itself to death  
And *Naphtali* on the *heights* of the field.

- 
- 19 באו מלכים נלחמו  
אז נלחמו מלכי כנען  
בתענך על מי מגדו  
בצע כסף לא לקחו
- 20 מן השמים נלחמו הכוכבים  
21 ממסלותם נלחמו עם סיסרא  
נחל קישון גרפם  
נחל קדומים נחל קישון  
תדרכי נפשי עז
- 22 אז הלמי עקבי סוס  
מדהרות דהרות אבירי
- 23 אורו מרוז אמר מלאך יהוה  
אורו ארור ישביה  
כי לא באו לעזרת יהוה  
לעזרת יהוה בגבורים
- 
- 24 תברך מנשים יעל  
מנשים באהל תברך  
אשת חבר הקניזי<sup>5</sup>  
25 מים שאל חלב נתנה  
בספל אדירים הקריבה חמאה  
26 ידה ליתד תשלחנה
- וימינה להלמות עמלים  
והלמה סיסרא מחקה ראשו  
ומחצה וחלפה רכתו
- 27 בין רגליה כרע שכב  
בין רגליה כרע נפל  
באשר כרע שם נפל שדוד
- 28 בעד החלון נשקפה ותיבב  
אם סיסרא בעד האשנב
- The kings came, they *fought*,  
Then *fought* the kings of Canaan,  
At Taanach by the waters of Megiddo  
Not a piece of silver did they gain.
- From heaven the stars fought,  
From their paths they fought with Sisera.  
The brook Kishon swept them away,  
That ancient brook, the brook Kishon.  
Trample them down, O my soul, with  
courage.
- Then pranced the hoofs of the horses  
Pursuing, their heroes pursuing.
- Curse ye Meroz, cries the messenger of  
Jahweh,  
Curse Meroz, curse the dwellers therein,  
For they came not to the victory of Jah-  
weh,  
To the victory of Jahweh among the  
heroes.
- Blessed above women be Jael,  
Above women in the tent shall be *blessed*  
The wife of Heber the Kenite!  
Water he asked for, she gave him milk,  
In a splendid bowl she gave him cream.  
She stretched out her hand to the (tent-)  
pin,  
And her right hand to the workman's  
hammer,<sup>6</sup>  
And hammered Sisera, crushed his skull,  
And pierced his temples, through and  
through.
- At her feet he sank, he lay,  
At her feet he sank, he fell,  
Where he sank, there he fell crushed.
- Through the windows she peers and  
mourns,  
The mother of Sisera, through the lattice :

<sup>5</sup> In the text 24c precedes 24b.

<sup>7</sup> MT. כרע נפל שכב.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 4:21, ויעה וימת.

מדוע בשש רכבו לבוא	Why is his chariot so delayed in coming?
מדוע אחרו פעמי מרכבותיו	Why tarries the tramping of his chariot 29 steeds?
חכמות שדיה תענינה לה	The shrewdest of her princesses reply,
אה היא תשיב אמריה לה	Yea, she herself answers her question :
הלא ימצאו יחלקו שלל	They are finding spoil, they are divid- 30 ing it,
רחם רחמתיים לראש גבר	One or two damsels for each man,
שלל צבעים לסיסרא	Plunder of dyed stuff for Sisera,
שלל צבעים רקמה	Plunder of dyed stuff, variegated,
צבע רקמתיים לצוארי שלל	Colored, worked on both sides, from the neck of the plundered !

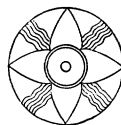
כן יאבדו כל אויביו יהוה	So may all thine enemies perish, Jahweh, 31
ואהבו כצאת השמש בגבורתו	But those who love thee, as the sun when he rises in his power.

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## THE BABYLONIAN REPRESENTATION OF THE SOLAR DISK.

IN Dr. Friedrich Delitzsch's late publication, *Die Entstehung des ältesten Schriftsystems*, which I am very glad to see dedicated to our three American explorers of Niffer, Messrs. Haynes, Hilprecht, and Peters, I find on pp. 128-30 a discussion of the meaning of the four sets of waving lines which appear in the sun-disk, as represented on the table before the seated sun-god Samaš on the famous tablet of Abu-habba, figured in W A I, V, 60, and often reproduced. Separated from its accessories the disk takes the form of the accompanying cut. Professor Delitzsch supposes these waving lines to represent waves of light. He says :



Die Wellenlinien malen die von der Sonne aus sich ergiessenden Strahlen, und wenn mit eben solchen Wellenlinien, der Richtung der sitzenden Körpergestalt folgend, die ganze Person des Sonnengottes bedeckt ist, so will dies andeuten, dass der Sonnengott in ein Strahlengewand eingehüllt ist: Licht ist das Kleid, das er anhat. Genau die nämlichen Wellenlinien, nur in horizontaler Richtung, finden sich zu den Füßen des Sonnengottes . . . um das Wasser abzubilden. Wir brauchen zum Verständniss dieser bildlichen Darstellungsweisen nicht lange von den Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Licht und Wasser, ihrer beider Wellenbewegung, ihrer Klarheit u. s. w. zu spre-